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February 2, 2004

Mary Cottrell, Secretary
Department of Telecommunications and Energy
One South Station
Boston, Mass. 02110

RE: NStar Standby Rate tariffs, DTE 03-121

Dear Secretary Cottrell:

This letter is filed on behalf of the low-income weatherization and fuel assistance network (described in G.L. c. 25, sec. 19) and the Massachusetts Community Action Program Directors Association Inc. (MASSCAP), including their member agencies. It requests that the aforementioned parties be granted intervenor status in the above-captioned docket.

G.L. c. 25, sec. 19 (St. 1997, c. 164, sec. 37) provides that “The low-income residential demand-side management and education programs shall be implemented through the low-income weatherization and fuel assistance program network” MASSCAP is the organization of community action programs that make up most of the low-income weatherization and fuel assistance program network. Members of MASSCAP implement the NStar Companies’ low-income DSM programs, including education; they also counsel customers of the Companies about rates and payment options, and arrange rate payment assistance (including LIHEAP) for the Companies’ customers. Many of the Companies’ customers, especially the low-income customers served by members of MASSCAP, are having an especially difficult time paying their bills due to the significant increases in the past year in the price, and the price volatility, of utility services.

Petitioners are thus substantially affected by the level and volatility of the Companies’ prices because (a) their clients (or clients of their members) are more likely to require assistance as rates and volatility rise, (b) the efficiency, weatherization, education, counseling and payment assistance services they

(or their members) offer are less likely to result in affordable utility bills for their clients as rates and volatility rise, (c) they (or their members) will be increasingly called upon to secure other means of assistance with utility bills as rates and volatility rise, (d) they (or their members) will be increasingly called upon to assist clients who have had utility service terminated for non-payment, and (e) they will be called upon by their members to assist them in helping members' clients as rates and volatility rise. Petitioners also represent the interest of their (or their members') clients in reasonable and stable rates that they can afford to manage and pay; clients are substantially affected by rates that they cannot afford to pay because they are unreasonably high or volatile.

The petitioners have questions about price levels and price stability that could result from a decision in this docket. If settlement is not attainable, petitioners may file oral and documentary evidence on these topics (particularly the need for reasonable and stable supply prices and means to achieve them), in response to positions taken by other parties in this docket. Relief sought would include a means of assuring that long-run costs of Standby Service or not borne by petitioners or their members and clients.

Wherefore, the low-income weatherization and fuel assistance network, and the Massachusetts Community Action Program Directors Association Inc., respectfully request that the Department grant intervenor status to these petitioners.

Respectfully submitted,

The low-income weatherization and fuel assistance network, and
Massachusetts Community Action Program Directors Association Inc.
By

Jerrold Oppenheim

cc (by e-mail):

William H. Stevens, Jr., Hearing Officer

David Rosenzweig, Esq., for NStar

Joe Diamond, MASSCAP

Elliott Jacobson, Low-income weatherization and fuel
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